(b) and (c) The Central Govt. had noted the increasing trend of Govt. doctors especially the Specialists seeking Voluntary Retirement or Resigning due to the attractive financial Compensation and other generous service benefits in foreign assignments/domestic private sector. The Govt. had constituted an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Javid Choudhury, former Secretary (Health) to suggest measures/disincentives that should be introduced to arrest the outflow of doctors and changes in the terms and conditions of service. The Committee has made a number of recommendations to improve the lot of these doctors. Amongst the steps taken by the Government (i) the age of retirement of specialists in the three sub-cadres of Teaching, Non-teaching and Public Health has already been increased from 60 to 62 years (ii) the period of study leave has also been increased from two years to three years in respect of CHS doctors.

Snake bites and deaths

2707. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that annually over 50,000 people in the country die after bitten by snakes;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering any national policy on treating snake bites and also to ensure fast and effective use of anti venom besides making it available to health care centres in backward villages; and

(c) if so, the salient features of the Policy thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) As per available information, received from Directorates of Health Services of States/UTs, the number of deaths reported due to snakebite in the country, year-wise for the last three years is 1423 in the year 2004, 1502 in 2005 and 1114 in 2006.

(b) and (c) The treatment protocol for Snakebites is being finalized. The information regarding protocol would be widely disseminated to all stakeholders, including State Governments for effective treatment.

Since Health is a State subject, the State Government is primarily responsible to ensure availability of anti-snake venom drugs/vaccines in health care centres of the respective States.

Diabetes a global problem

2708. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that diabetes have become a global problem;

(b) if so, whether there is any national policy on the treatment, prevention and care of diabetic patients; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?